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# What a Muslim Woman should know about **Menstruation and Postpartum Condition**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allâh,  
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

“They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: That is an *Adha* (a harmful thing for a husband to have a sexual intercourse with his wife while she is having her menses), therefore keep away from women during menses and go not unto them till they have purified (from menses and have taken a bath) ... ” (V. 2:222)

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## Publishers Note

The birth of a human being is a most amazing phenomenon. The study of this subject alone is one of the greatest efforts of mankind. The physical cycles that the body of woman must endure in order to maintain this act of creation should be respected to the highest degree. Allâh mentions that our mothers have born us with difficulty and struggle and because of this are due the highest respect. One among many of the difficulties that women must brave, are the doubts that these conditions present to the correct observance of her religion. How is her fasting affected, how are her prayers affected, how is her ability to pursue her studies affected, and how are her conjugal relations affected by her ever changing physical condition in relation to her role as the sole vessel of the birth of man.

It is with great pride and solemn humility that we at Darussalam present *What A Muslim Woman Should Know About Menstruation and Postpartum Condition*.

It is the purpose of this humble presentation to bring relief to any doubts or misunderstandings she might have concerning the observance of her religious obligations. So she might without hindrance, and with the ease provided by the knowledge of what is right and correct, fulfill her duties to her Creator Who has honored her above all of creation.

In this compilation, the pertinent rules have been presented from the writings of Shaikh Muhammad bin Salih Al-Uthaimin, which are exactly in accordance with the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah*. As the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* are the only reliable authority and source of knowledge towards which every Muslim should turn up to for the needs of this world and the Hereafter. When we rely on these Divine sources as an authority to solve our problems, we feel complete satisfaction, comfort and ease devoid of any type of doubt or any feeling of uncertainty.

It is only scholars who can derive rulings from *Shari'ah* and give legal verdicts. Hence the people are commanded by Allâh to have recourse to the pious scholars of religion.

Allâh says:

“So ask of those who know the Scripture if you know not.” (*An-Nahl*, 16:43)

The most asked questions by the Muslim women in this regard and their answers and *Shari'ah* rulings given by the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia Shaikh Ibn Baz, Shaikh Ibn Uthaimin, Shaikh Ibn Jibreen and others, become the second part of this compilation making it a very much beneficial presentation on the subject.

**Abdul Malik Mujahid**  
General Manager

## **Definition of Menstruation and its Philosophy**

Philologically, menstruation is defined as just flowing or the running of something; but legislatively (according to Islamic law), it means the blood which is discharged from the female at given times pursuant to nature, without any obvious reason. It is a natural blood which is not caused by a disease, wound, fall or delivery. Since this blood is a natural blood, its character varies as per physical constitution of the female, the environment and the climate, the lady lives in. Hence, the timing of the discharge of blood varies from woman to woman.

### **What is the Philosophy and Secrets lying behind this Blood?**

The foetus within the mother's abdomen (womb), cannot be fed by the traditional way like those children who are outside of the womb. The matter which makes a mother the most intimate one, and who gives her full mercy to it, remains unable to provide it with any food. Therefore Allâh, glory is to Him, has created bloody secretions (discharges) in the female on which the embryo inside the mother's abdomen can be nourished without the need of having food and digesting it, which otherwise will have been an impossible matter. Such exudations penetrate into its body through the umbilical cord of the mother where the blood goes through its veins. By this way the foetus becomes able to receive the food with least trouble. So, Blessed is Allâh, the Best to create. From the above foregoing, we realize clearly the useful secrets lying behind this blood. Thus, in the event the woman gets pregnant, the blood of menses will eventually stop, and cannot be menstruated except in very rare cases. The same case applies to the foster mothers, with the exception of a few, who can menstruate; especially at the first days of the fosterage period.



## Timing and Duration of Menstruation

This chapter concerns two aspects regarding menstruation:

**First Aspect:** The age at which the blood of menstruation may start.

**Second Aspect:** The duration of menstruation.

As regards the first aspect, it is said that the blood of menstruation flows out from the woman between 12 up to 50 years of age. However, she may get menstruated below or above the mentioned ages according to her physical constitution, environment and ambient climate. Religious scholars ('*Ulama*'). Allâh's Mercy may be upon them, differed of the age at which the woman gets menstruated in the sense that the blood will not flow from her before or after a given age; and if it happened that any female saw such blood flowing, then it will be considered as a spoiled blood and not a menstruation's one!

Regarding this point scholars differed thereon, Dârimi, after stating the controversies and the disagreements, said that all these points, from his point of view, are wrong since the only authority controlling all these endeavours is the flowing of the menstruation blood. Any portion to be seen therefrom at any status or age should be identified as menstruation and Allâh is the All-Knowing. The comment of Dârimi is the correct one, the same thing has also been stated by Shaikh Al-Islam Ibn Taimiyah. Depending on this, just as a female feels flowing of the blood, she will be considered as menstruated even if she is below nine or over fifty years old. This is because Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ have made the rules ensuing from the menstruation as being existed. At the same time, neither Allâh nor His Messenger ﷺ mentioned a certain age for the woman to be described as menstruated for the turning up of the pertinent blood. So, we have to take the existence of the menstruation blood on which rules are pending as an authoritative reference. Moreover, if the turning up of the blood of menstruation is given

for a limited time period of age, then this will need to be proved by an evidence either from the Noble Qur'ân or from the *Sunnah*. However, both are free from such proof.

The second aspect concerns the duration of the woman's monthly course, i.e., how long does the blood lasts? '*Ulama*' differed to a large extent to this point also, their opinions thereon amounted to about six or seven. With a group of '*Ulama*', Ibn Al-Mundhir said: "There is no limit of days for the minimum or the maximum duration of the lasting of the blood of menstruation." I comment saying that the above decision is similar to Dârimi's one which has been stated previously and which has been also chosen by Shaikh Al-Islam Ibn Taimiyah. Such a decision is considered to be the correct one since it is evidenced by the Noble Qur'ân, *Sunnah* and the indications or arguments of '*Ulama*'.

### The First Evidence

Allâh says in the following Verse:

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَأَعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرْنَ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٢٢]

"They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: That is an *Adha* (a harmful thing for a husband to have a sexual intercourse with his wife while she is having her menses), therefore keep away from women during menses and go not unto them till they have purified (from menses and have taken a bath) ... " (V. 2:222)

Allâh has made the prohibition term of not approaching the female during the course as being connected with being in a clean state and He did not make the term as elapsing of one day or night, three days or fifteen days etc. This proves that the rule is based on the course of the woman as being existed or not existed. So, when the blood of menstruation is found, the pertinent rules eventually will come into force; and when the

woman gets free therefrom then the relevant applicable rules will become null and void.

### The Second Evidence

What has been authenticated in *Sahih Muslim* (one of the approved books comprising the correct traditions of the Prophet ﷺ) is that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said to his wife ‘Āishah رضي الله عنها who got menstruated, while she was already in a state of *Ihrām* to perform ‘*Umrah*, to do the same rites which the pilgrims do except that she should not circumambulate around the Ka‘bah till she gets clean, i.e., till the blood of menstruation stops. ‘Āishah رضي الله عنها stated that she became pure (clean) on the day of Sacrifice.

It has been narrated in *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* that the Prophet ﷺ told her to wait till the time she got cleaned of the blood and then to go out to Tan‘im station (a place for *Ihrām* near Makkah) and to complete the *Arkân* of *Hajj*. Thus, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ made the rule of being forbidden in the completion of the other *Arkân* of *Hajj* and pending these until the state of cleanliness is achieved. He ﷺ did not restrict the term of prohibition to a certain time and this explains the rules of the monthly period of menstruation in case it is existed or not.

### The Third Evidence

The trends and elaborations handled by Islamic scholars around this issue are not mentioned in the Qur’ân or the *Sunnah*, despite the necessity and the need required for making them clear enough. So, if it was incumbent upon people to be well acquainted with this issue and to worship Allâh, then, Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ would have already made it obvious to everybody just as the rules ensuing for prayers, fasting, marriage, divorce, inheritance and other important matters. This will be, as Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ have made clear about the times of prayers along with the due timings, its bowing and prostration; charity (giving alms), the financial limitation for

distributing the prescribed share and people whom alms should be given; fasting with its tenure and time; *Hajj* (pilgrimage) and other lower rank issues than those mentioned above. The morals of having food, drink, sleeping and as well as the manners regarding the call of nature and even the number of stones with which you should clean the organs of stool or urine. This is besides other minute and great matters which Allâh, the Almighty has completed the religion with and made blessings perfect for believers as Allâh has stated in the following Verses:-

﴿وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بَيِّنَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ﴾ [النحل: ٨٩]

“...And we have sent down to you the Book (the Qur’ân) as an exposition of everything...” (16:89)

And he said:

﴿مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ﴾ [يوسف: ١١١]

“... It (the Qur’ân) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of the Allâh’s existing Books (the Torah, the Gospel and other Scriptures of Allâh) and a detailed explanation of everything ...” (12:111)

Since the issues stated by the Islamic scholars around this subject have not been elaborated in the Noble Qur’ân nor mentioned in the *Sunnah* and these are free from such elaborations and explanations stated by the Islamic scholars for settling this issue, so it becomes clear that they cannot be relied upon; and reliance should only be focused on the content of the menstruation, upon which the relevant jural laws are dependent whether it existed or not.

The rules pertaining to the monthly courses are not mentioned in the Noble Qur’ân nor in the *Sunnah*, and this itself is an evidence which should not be considered to help those concerned with this issue for mere knowledge, as jural decisions cannot be determined except through a legislative evidence to be quoted either from the Holy